



MONTANA WETLAND NEWS

1520 E Sixth Ave • P. O. Box 200901 • Helena, MT 59620-0901 • Phone (406) 444-6652

News Bits about Montana's Wetlands – To submit your news item, please e-mail Isaul@mt.gov

The Montana Wetland Council announces the State's new 5-Year Conservation Plan. Click here to download a copy: [Priceless Resources - A Strategic Framework for Wetland and Riparian Area Conservation and Restoration in Montana 2008 - 2012](#).

The Wetland Council is re-organizing to include 6 working groups and a steering committee to implement the tasks identified in the "Strategic Framework". Please contact the Chair below if you are interested in participating:

Public Education/Professional Training WG – Chair, New DEQ wetland staff

Mapping WG – Chair, Greg Kudray (gkudray@mt.gov)

Assessment & Monitoring WG – Chair, Linda Vance (livance@mt.gov)

Restoration WG – Chair, Tom Hinz (thinz@mt.gov)

Local Government WG – Chair, Joe Meek (jmeek@mt.gov)

Vulnerable Wetlands/Public Policy WG – Chair Lynda Saul (Isaul@mt.gov)

Steering Committee – Chair Lynda Saul (Isaul@mt.gov)

Save the Date

Dillon Montana - June 10-12, Wetland Habitat tour, Wetland Council meeting and Strategic Framework rollout.

Stay tuned for more information about the field trips scheduled for June 10 and 12 and workshop/meetings June 11.

Grants

EPA's Fiscal Year 2008 Assessment and Watershed Protection Program Grants (AWPPGs) has been posted. The due date for proposals is: April 22, 2008. The total amount of expected funding available is approximately \$500,000. It is anticipated that five to eight awards will be made under this RFP in three categories: (1) Assessment and TMDL Workshops; (2) Tools, Incentives, and Products Training for the Watershed Approach; and (3) Tools, Incentives, and Trainings that Foster the Financing of Water Quality Protection and/or **Habitat Restoration/Protection Activities** on a Watershed Scale. Please contact EPA's Tim Icke if you have any questions at: icke.tim@epa.gov
<http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do;jsessionid=HL4YJ3clnR2JmLzmhgq51cwyhNW6pVM0DTxGh1XNG1lh2j2ymcWY!-402045272?oppld=40880&flag2006=false&mode=VIEW>

EPA Wetland Program Development Grants RFP is expected to be released in early April 2008. Project proposals should address a "Strategic Framework" ideal outcome in addition to EPA goal. Montana will have an internal review of pre-proposals for state, local and NGO proposals about 3 weeks after the RFP is released. Watch your e-mail for the RFP announcement.

The Montana Natural Heritage Program's [Montana Wetlands/Riparian Mapping Center](#) is working on numerous [link to current projects map](#) projects. Under the guidance of MTNHP ecologists, 3 full time wetland digitizing technician delineate, digitize and classify wetlands and riparian areas in an ArcGIS environment using the protocols and procedures in *National Standards and Quality Components* (USFWS 2004). The 2005 NAIP Color IR imagery is the image source for mapping. NRCS soil surveys, NHD high-resolution data, digital elevation models and other ancillary data sources will be used to increase mapping accuracy. All map data is produced using the standard protocols and conventions developed by the USFWS for image interpretation, cartography, and digitizing (USFWS 2004) and final maps are incorporated into the National Wetland Inventory. Projects are collaboratively funded

New Publication

[Wetlands of the Bitterroot Valley: Change and Ecological Functions](#)

Montana Natural Heritage Program. January 2008. This is taken from the executive summary...



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The objective of this project was to evaluate wetland diversity and analyze wetland change in the Bitterroot River watershed of western Montana. We characterized the spectrum of wetland types and analyzed wetland change by comparing the original National Wetland Inventory (NWI) baseline in the early 1980's to our new NWI mapping based on year 2005 imagery. We also developed a system for labeling mapped wetland polygons using a combined NWI – HGM (Hydrogeomorphic) code....

Montana Land Reliance reported the following 2007 achievements: conservation easements on 41 properties totaling 98,360 acres for a cumulative total of 778,433 acres protected. Within that acreage there were approximately 632 acres of wetlands protected in 2007 for a combined total of 8,105 acres protected. These are isolated wetlands and figures do not include riparian wetlands. There were 182 miles of stream frontage protected in 2007 for a total of 1,340 miles of stream front protected. [Montana Land Reliance Land Trust Conservation Easement 2006 Achievements](#) For more information, please contact Michael Downy at michael@mtlandreliance.org

Wetlands protection in the Flathead Valley is happening. Read about the Siderius relatives in [People will enjoy this open space for a long time - Daily Interlake](#); about Dr. Glenn and Hazel Johnston in [Saving land for the future - Daily Interlake](#), and general opinions about these activities in [Landowners keep an eye on the future-Opinion Page Daily Interlake](#)

The [Montana Department of Transportation 2007 Wetland Monitoring Reports](#) are out on the MDT website for viewing by the public: click on the above link and then click 2007 or any other year of interest. MDT is currently in the process of completing the construction of two wetland mitigation projects in the spring of 2008. 1) Lone Pine wetland site on the CSKT's Flathead Reservation just below Dry Fork Reservoir which will total approximately 24 acres of created and restored wetlands within an 80-acre easement. 2) Big Hole Grazing Association wetland in the Big Hole Valley which will restore approximately 36.8 acres of wetlands within a 96-acre easement located approximately 3.5 miles southwest of the town of Wisdom. MDT is also planning to finalize the 2008 version of the MDT Wetland Assessment Method Guidebook by April 2008 for use in the upcoming field season. For more information, please contact Larry Urban at lurban@mt.gov

[IWJV Montana Fact Sheet](#) to provide you with an overview of the Intermountain West Joint Venture and its relevance to Montanans. Additional information is available the website www.iwvj.org, including the attached outreach piece on current efforts: [Intermountain West Joint Venture Annual Operational Plan FY 2008](#)

For those that want to follow the 2008 Farm Bill, here are two sources that provide overviews and opinions of interest: [Farm Bill: National Association of Conservation District](#) and [Farm Bill: Ducks Unlimited](#)

Montana Water Rights and Wetlands

For Montana water rights there are currently beneficial use / purpose categories specific to wetlands and wetland mitigation credits. For more information, please contact the New Appropriations Program Manager – [Kim Overcast](#) , [Water Rights Bureau](#), [Montana Department of Natural Resources](#)

[Proposal For A North Central Area Integrated Science Team Project](#): Managing wetlands in the face of shifting agricultural practices, energy development, and hydrologic patterns has been submitted for internal funding with the USDI – Geological Survey. The author's state "We are intrigued with the question: 'How will the conversion of CRP land into crop and biofuels production affect groundwater gradients and salt brine movements near FWS wetlands?'" For more information, please contact Rick Sodja sojda@montana.edu

New! Click this link [Montana Wetland Council](#) to add your name to the moderated discussion subscription list now available to receive wetland updates by e-mail. Remember to set your email filters by adding the following address to your approved email list: deq_montana_wetland_council@lists.mt.gov